

Mainstreaming Gender and Youth in the Local Market Vegetable Value Chain



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

George Ochieng, a youth member of the Farmers Agricultural Development Center (FADC), one of 48 groups assisted by the USAID, is learning new farming techniques to grow tomatoes and other crops. With a few basic agronomic skills under his belt, Ochieng was able to generate the cash to lease FADC's water pump and his profit steadily increased from \$40 a month to \$150 a month over four years, a 375 percent increase. He has since bought his own pump and irrigation equipment. He has also paid school fees for his younger sister for the last three years, built an iron-roofed home and saved enough to start his university education.

“Without the assistance of USAID-KHCP... I couldn't have even dreamed of going to the university.”

**– George Ochieng,
Kenyan youth farmer**

Kenya Horticulture Competitiveness Project (KHCP)

KHCP is a five-year, USAID-funded Feed the Future initiative benefitting more than 200,000 smallholder farmers by providing them with more income, better food security and improved nutrition. Launched in 2010, KHCP works across the value chain to enhance the overall competitiveness of the horticultural sector. Key activities include helping farmers to:

- Grow more and better fruits, vegetables, nuts and flowers
- Increase value addition through processing of horticultural produce
- Link with dynamic markets both in Kenya and abroad
- Benefit from improved agricultural policy

KHCP's Gender and Youth Mainstreaming Approach

KHCP recognizes that the equitable participation of men, women and youth (18-30) is an important driver of competitiveness. Its *mainstreaming* approach focuses on integrating gender and youth issues into existing project offerings, rather than developing separate activities. This approach is built around 4 principles:

1. We will seek to understand the **roles and contributions** of men, women, children and youth within the horticultural value chain.
2. We will enable men, women and youth to **help design, fully participate in and benefit from** value chain activities
3. We will address the unique **constraints and opportunities** of men, women and youth in horticultural value chains
4. We will support the **empowerment of men, women and youth as entrepreneurs**

Key Local Market Vegetable Value Chain Activities

USAID-KHCP is advancing a number of enhancement activities within the market vegetable value chain, including:

- **Increasing the availability of hybrid seedlings.**
- Training small holder farmers on **good agricultural practices and natural resource management**
- Introducing **agricultural innovations such as greenhouses, shade nets and drip irrigation** to boost productivity
- Developing new **domestic market linkage** opportunities
- **Disseminating accurate marketing information**

Focus of KHCP Gender and Youth Mainstreaming Activities

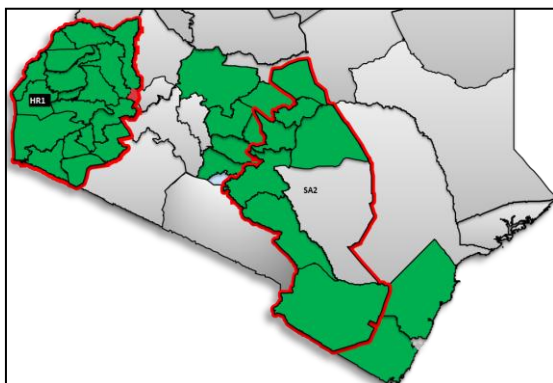
Women and youth often have limited access and control over resources, which impedes their ability to participate in and contribute to the local market vegetable value chains. KHCP activities seek to address gender and age-based constraints, thereby creating more equitable opportunities and improving value chain efficiency.



Photo by Fintrac Inc.

Rispa Okech monitors the dehydration process of African leafy vegetable at Mace Foods in Eldoret town. With the average age of employees ranging from 20 to 25, Mace Foods illustrates how local market vegetable is engaging women and youth in value addition and income generating activities.

KHCP Local Market Vegetables Areas



Map highlighting local market vegetable value chain interventions.

Contact Information

Fintrac
Piedmont Plaza, Wing A, 3rd Floor, Ngong Road
P.O. Box 3074-00506, Nyayo Stadium, Nairobi
Tel: 254-020-2121838, 254-020-2121839
khcp@fintrac.com

www.growkenya.org
www.fintrac.com

Putting Mainstreaming Principles into Action for Gender Inclusion

KHCP is enhancing opportunities for men and women within the market vegetable value chain by:

- **Accommodating gender differences in business development service (BDS) provision.** In recognition that men and women often have different schedules and responsibilities, KHCP schedules technical trainings and services at times and locations that accommodate women's time and mobility constraints.
- **Increasing men's and women's adoption of technology.** KHCP and its partners recognize that women often have less access to information and training on new technologies. KHCP is increasing women's adoption of technologies such as water harvesting and drip irrigation, by ensuring that they have equal opportunities to learn about technologies and that chosen technologies are appropriate and accessible for both men and women. Specific considerations to ensure accessibility include: weight, maneuverability, durability, reparability, social acceptability and cost.
- **Improving men's capacity to handle produce.** KHCP staff and partners have identified that men lack knowledge of how to properly handle produce, because such tasks are typically perceived as women's activities. KHCP is addressing this gender gap in knowledge through hands-on training.

Putting Mainstreaming Principles into Action for Youth Inclusion

KHCP is enhancing opportunities for youth within the market vegetable value chain by:

- **Awareness of commercial opportunities from vegetables –** KHCP is actively promoting a range of commercial opportunities in the production, processing, and trade of market vegetables. These commercial opportunities help shift the mindset of many youth, who typically perceive the cultivation of vegetables as a subsistence activity carried out by older women. One effective promotion technique has been site visits, so that youth can see successful commercial growers first-hand.
- **Technologies to incorporate natural resource management –** KHCP is drawing upon the *early adaptor* culture among young people when it comes to the use of new technologies to better manage natural resources at the farm level. This includes engaging youth in water management, integrated pest management, and effective fertilizer use, along with the use of technology to aid production and marketing.
- **Trainings that address group dynamics –** KHCP's BDS providers are building the capacity of farmer groups to recruit and retain younger members. This involves helping long-standing groups recognize that younger members may bring new ideas and fresh perspective, and may require changes to how, when and where meetings are held. Farmer groups have also discovered that youth are motivated to carry out the market research and intelligence gathering that adult members often lack the interest, time, or energy to carry out.

Project coordination offices

KHCP operates out of offices in Nairobi, Mombasa, Kibwezi, Thika, Kisumu, Eldoret, and Bungoma.